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1. On the basis of the names available at present the SED apparently does not have a majority in the Land committees of the National Front (NF), but furnishes the first chairmen in all the Laender in the German Democratic Republic, except in Berlin and Brandenburg. * Since, on the other hand, all SED Land leaders are members of the national council which is superior to the NF Land committees, they will undoubtedly control developments in the Laender from that body, especially since, as members of the national council, they are definitely considered representatives of the Laender. There is, moreover, a growing tendency in the National Front as well as in the state administration to concentrate the machinery on the zonal level. It must also be remembered that all specific organizational work is actually done by the respective secretaries who always are SED functionaries and belong to the "Minor Secretariats" of the SED provincial organization. The two chairmen of the NF Land committees act chiefly as figureheads. For example, it can hardly be expected that Professor Theodor Brugsch, in his capacity as first chairman of the Berlin NF committee will be likely to do anything more than sign resolutions. With all other members of this NF committee also heavily engaged in professional or other political activities, their duties are largely confined to formalities. The situation in the district and local committees which carry out the actual NF work is, of course, quite different. In these bodies, however, SED influence still prevails, particularly with regard to control of activities such as the execution of local supplementary plans.

Meetings of NF Land Committees

2. Operational plans have been sent to the NF Land committees for comment. The NF Land committee of Saxony decided on 18 February to conduct a large-scale campaign between 15 March and 15 April for the collection of non-ferrous metals. Other campaigns are concerned with the procurement of seed-potatoes (the so-called Bosselmann program), agricultural amelioration, afforestation work and the cultivation of waste areas. On 28 February 1950 the Brandenburg Land committee asked 400 individuals, from all parties and organizations, including the heads of all departments and sections of the Land government and the experts and advisers

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of all pertinent corporations and institutions to attend an education meeting at which the program for Brandenburg was discussed. A conference of the Land committee of Saxony-Anhalt was held on the same date. Adam Wolfram, the first chairman at this meeting ordered the mobilization of the rural population for mutual aid in springtime agricultural work and called for a campaign to eliminate "agents" and "saboteurs". Subcommittees were organized to prepare operational programs for the Kreis committees. The fact that this operational program of the Land committee was signed not only by the leaders of the individual parties and organizations but by Minister President Werner Brusenke (SED) for the ministers' council of the Land government may be indicative of the position to be held by the NF in the field of public law. It appears obvious that the NF committees are actually additional executive bodies of the respective government agencies. This became still more apparent in a meeting of the Berlin Land committee on 9 March at which Hans Jendretzki (SED), Max Schneider (NDP), Adolf Deter (FDGB), Burgomaster Reinhold Schwarz (LDP), and Zanthoff (SED), first secretary of the Land committee, were the spokesmen. Hans Jendretzki pointed out that the operational program of the Berlin Magistrat will be part of the activities planned by the NF.

Actions of the District and Local Committees

3. Inasmuch as the Land committees have not yet been able to draw up operational programs for all the Kreis and local committees of the NF, the work of these committees is still not uniform. The following may demonstrate, however, the type of activity practiced and how the new compulsory labor system is gradually being put into operation.
 - a. The committee of Kreis Brandenburg registered 41 plants, the employees of which pledged to work extra shifts without pay to further the construction of the Brandenburg rolling mill which was declared of first priority in reconstruction. On two occasions local Free German Youth units contributed additional work on Sunday.
 - b. The committee of Kreis Groeditz in Saxony is planning to procure a number of electric motors from private enterprises for the steel plant located in that district.
 - c. The committee of Bezirk Bad Suelze in Mecklenburg collected 35 tons of seed-potatoes under the Bosselmann program. Ortmann, a protestant pastor was in charge of this project.
 - d. The local committee of Teicha in Saxony-Anhalt required each farmer in that town to make an extra delivery of seed-potatoes for the spring planting; 2,150 kg of potatoes were procured in this manner.
 - e. The Brandenburg Land committee ordered each Kreis committee to furnish 30 workmen for a period of three weeks to be employed in the construction of the Rothensee cellulose combine. The cost of these projects is to be paid by workers of other plants who are required to work extra shifts.
 - f. The committee of Kreis Rostock is planning to collect DM 250,000 (East) for reconstruction purposes and required workers to move more than 25,000 cubic meters of soil on Sundays without pay.

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- g. The committee of Kreis Weimar constructed a water conduit three km in length by drafting Weimar citizens to do the construction work. For this project DM 20,000 (East) were collected; the construction work was done exclusively on Sundays.
- h. The local committee of Struth-Helersdorf in Thuringia has assumed the responsibility for reconditioning the roads of that community; 600 man hours and 40 hours of work by horses will be required for this project.
- i. The local committee of Leegebruch in Brandenburg is planning to construct a railroad branch to Hennigsdorf. The population of Osthavelland is to furnish construction crews.
- k. The committee of Kreis Greifswald is draining Korter Lake.
- l. The committee of Kreis Rudolstadt is collecting 300 tons of scrap metal for the Vax Steel Plant in Unterwellenborn.
- m. The committee of Kreis Meissen is organizing two working Sundays per month each with 3,000 "volunteers".
- n. Through special propagandists who call on all private enterprises in trade and industry the committee of Kreis Leipzig is attempting to apprentice juveniles.
- o. The committee of Kreis Schleitz is requiring "voluntary" workers to reconstruct the Saalburg bridge.
- p. The local committee of Gerechswitz in Saxony is utilizing a local soft coal deposit to supply the fuel needed by that town.

Organizational Shortcomings

- 4. It was expected that the program initiated by the NF committees would not only present difficulties between the governmental agencies and those of the Party but would also disquiet the population. Adam Wolfram, the first chairman of the Saxony-Anhalt NF, recently declared that the NF committees have failed to enlist the cooperation of that part of the population which is of importance, namely the workers and farmers. Those who engage in activities for the local NF committees are almost exclusively members of parties and organizations who, by their party discipline, cannot evade the "voluntary" employment. Although it is not openly admitted that the execution of these supplementary plans involves forced labor, the population is not deceived. The methods by which the population is made to cooperate are interesting. In cities the house and street functionaries register all employment of the people they control, in the rural areas that task is normally performed by the administrative agencies. Often when persons not connected with a party or organization refuse to cooperate they are accused of sabotaging the reconstruction program; this scheme for recruiting workers is known as the "people's solidarity" system and has been adopted in a number of localities. Functionaries are threatening to publish the names of all persons guilty of this type of "sabotage". A common practice in small towns is to post, in a centrally located place, a list on which all "volunteers" are directed to enter their names. A much more crude method was employed in Potsdam, where special-type identity cards together with ration coupons were issued to the residents. Those residents who failed to do additional work were either fined ration coupons or denied food ration cards altogether. In some towns, such as Magdeburg, additional work done is acknowledged by the NF committees by

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stamping "people's solidarity" cards which are issued to the workers. All of the foregoing devices appear to be contributing to the effectiveness of the compulsory labor system. *

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